

IRS News Release

Media Relations Office

Washington, D.C.

Media Contact: 202.622.4000

www.irs.gov/newsroom

Public Contact: 800.829.1040

IRS has \$2.5 Billion for Individuals Who Failed to File a 2000 Tax Return

IR-2004-18, Feb. 9, 2004

WASHINGTON — Unclaimed refunds totaling more than \$2.5 billion are awaiting nearly 2 million people who failed to file a 2000 income tax return, the Internal Revenue Service announced today. In order to collect the money, however, a return must be filed with an IRS office no later than April 15, 2004.

The IRS estimates that half of those who could claim refunds would receive more than \$529. In some cases, individuals had taxes withheld from their wages, or made payments against their taxes out of self-employed earnings, but had too little income to require filing a tax return. Some taxpayers may also be eligible for the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit.

"The clock is running if you want to get your refund," said IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson. "People who aren't required to file sometimes overlook that they had tax withheld. Don't wait until it's too late. We want all taxpayers to get the refund they're due."

In cases where a return was not filed, the law provides most taxpayers with a three-year window of opportunity for claiming a refund. If no return is filed to claim the refund within three years, the money becomes property of the U.S. Treasury. For 2000 returns, the window closes on April 15, 2004. The law requires that the return be properly addressed, postmarked and mailed by that date. There is no penalty assessed by the IRS for filing a late return qualifying for a refund.

The IRS reminds taxpayers seeking a 2000 refund that their checks will be held if they have not filed tax returns for 2001 or 2002. In addition, the refund will be applied to any amounts still owed to the IRS and may be used to satisfy unpaid child support or past due federal debts such as student loans.

By failing to file a return, individuals stand to lose more than refunds of taxes withheld or paid during 2000. Many low-income workers may not have claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Although eligible taxpayers may get a refund when their EITC is more than their tax, those who file returns more than three years late would be able only to offset their tax. They would not be able to receive refunds if the credit exceeded their tax.

Generally, individuals qualified for the EITC in 2000 if they earned less than \$31,152 and had more than one qualifying child living with them, less than \$27,413 with one qualifying child, or less than \$10,380 and had no qualifying child.

Current and prior year tax forms are available on the IRS Web site (www.irs.gov) or by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). Taxpayers who need help also can call the IRS help line at 1-800-829-1040.

The table below shows a state-by-state breakdown of estimates for individuals who failed to file a 2000 return with a refund due:

Individuals Who Failed to File a 2000 Return and Refund Amounts (Estimated)*			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Individuals</u>	<u>Median Refund</u>	<u>Total Refunds (\$000)</u>
Alabama	31,100	\$516	\$28,915
Alaska	9,100	\$529	\$13,264
Arizona	42,400	\$455	\$43,965
Arkansas	17,800	\$501	\$18,015
California	225,300	\$496	\$291,900
Colorado	32,200	\$499	\$41,907
Connecticut	21,900	\$602	\$38,774
Delaware	7,000	\$521	\$6,908
District of Columbia	7,800	\$504	\$11,770
Florida	128,700	\$533	\$190,191
Georgia	70,500	\$500	\$74,394
Hawaii	11,400	\$561	\$15,343
Idaho	6,900	\$445	\$6,749
Illinois	79,800	\$575	\$126,259
Indiana	38,500	\$558	\$42,219
Iowa	17,700	\$516	\$14,795
Kansas	20,000	\$518	\$18,950
Kentucky	20,500	\$531	\$21,135
Louisiana	30,500	\$507	\$33,599
Maine	6,900	\$470	\$8,829
Maryland	41,200	\$527	\$50,904
Massachusetts	45,300	\$590	\$84,454
Michigan	81,200	\$567	\$96,031
Minnesota	27,200	\$492	\$30,212
Mississippi	16,900	\$467	\$14,515
Missouri	39,200	\$504	\$40,373
Montana	4,900	\$467	\$4,566
Nebraska	9,300	\$496	\$8,902
Nevada	23,000	\$500	\$28,895

Individuals Who Failed to File a 2000 Return and Refund Amounts (Estimated)* (continued)			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Individuals</u>	<u>Median Refund</u>	<u>Total Refunds (\$000)</u>
New Hampshire	7,400	\$616	\$13,989
New Jersey	63,000	\$587	\$96,007
New Mexico	13,300	\$474	\$11,486
New York	119,900	\$570	\$234,995
North Carolina	58,300	\$469	\$56,819
North Dakota	2,400	\$495	\$2,029
Ohio	64,600	\$518	\$68,621
Oklahoma	26,000	\$505	\$25,665
Oregon	29,000	\$448	\$28,248
Pennsylvania	63,700	\$560	\$82,245
Rhode Island	6,800	\$548	\$8,486
South Carolina	23,500	\$457	\$22,124
South Dakota	3,200	\$502	\$2,939
Tennessee	31,600	\$523	\$35,668
Texas	157,800	\$563	\$203,353
Utah	11,500	\$457	\$13,146
Vermont	3,200	\$523	\$4,914
Virginia	56,000	\$522	\$70,070
Washington	50,100	\$551	\$68,681
West Virginia	5,900	\$546	\$7,610
Wisconsin	23,400	\$498	\$23,692
Wyoming	3,000	\$540	\$4,235
Armed Forces	7,800	\$641	\$5,770
U.S. Possessions	1,500	\$570	\$1,808
Foreign Addresses	5,500	\$1,000	\$26,200
Total	1,952,600	\$529	\$2,525,533
*Excluding Earned Income Tax Credit.			